

CITY OF ABERDEEN
PLANNING COMMISSION
ANNUAL REPORT 2017

***Celebrating
60 years of Planning
and Zoning***

This report was prepared by the Aberdeen Planning Commission and the Director of Planning and Community Development for the City of Aberdeen for the period of January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2017 and adopted by the Aberdeen Planning Commission on March 14, 2018.

PLANNING COMMISSION

Mark Schlottman, Chairman
Dominique Edwards, Vice Chairman
Charles Glassman (resigned in March 2017)
Michael Hiob
Jason Kolligs
Terri Preston
Amy Snyder
James Baxendell

BOARD OF APPEALS

John Landbeck, Chairman
Peggy Dymond
Patrick Faircloth
DeAunte Printup
Erick Stone
Amy Lindecamp, Alternate

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Gary Getz, AIA, NCARB
Douglas Kopeck, RLA
Merrill Messick, AIA
Dave O'Steen
Allen Philippe

DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Phyllis Grover

SENIOR PLANNER

Gilbert Jones

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT

Stefani Spector

**CITY OF ABERDEEN PLANNING COMMISSION
ANNUAL REPORT
2017**

INTRODUCTION

The Aberdeen Planning Commission was established in conjunction with the first Zoning Ordinance adopted on September 12, 1957. The Planning Commission completed a comprehensive Master Plan, recommended the boundaries of the various zoning districts, and the appropriate zoning regulations to be enforced. After 60 years of planning and zoning, the Planning Commission remains committed to advancing projects that promote economic development, encourage investment in the City, and improve the quality of life for our community.

The Planning Commission's Annual Report highlights the major planning, zoning, and development activities that occurred during the 2017 calendar year. This year's Annual Report includes a comprehensive review of the Development Code and Subdivision Regulations, building permit activity, and approved site plans/subdivision plats. Each of these initiatives worked towards implementing the State's vision for sustainable communities that protect the natural environment, direct growth, maintain and improve infrastructure, and include citizen participation in the process. Overall, the City did not have any restrictions on development in the designated Priority Funding Area during the 2017 reporting period.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the City of Aberdeen has a population of 15,580, making it the largest municipality by population in Harford County. The City is served by a diverse transportation system including one interstate highway (I-95), one federal highway (US 40) and five state highways (MD 22, MD 132, MD 462, MD 715, and MD 7), MARC commuter rail service and AMTRAK passenger service, Harford Transit LINK and MTA bus service. The City of Aberdeen functions as an independent municipality, providing many public services for its citizens. The City has its own planning and zoning authority, water and sewer services, police department, and public works department. Fire protection service is provided by the Aberdeen Volunteer Fire Department. Harford County Government provides schools, courts, additional police protection, health, recreation, transit links, and other community services.

PLANNING IN ABERDEEN

Legal Authority

The authority to plan for the City's development and to enact and enforce laws relating to land planning and zoning is derived from the Local Government and Land Use Articles of the Annotated Code of Maryland and the City Charter.

Land use planning and regulation in Aberdeen is the responsibility of five official bodies: the City Council, the Department of Planning and Community Development, the Planning Commission, the Board of Appeals, and the Architectural Review Committee. The City Council adopts the Comprehensive Plan, enacts legislation to ensure compliance with the Plan, adopts amendments to the Development Code and the Zoning Map, and funds capital improvements necessary to implement the Plan.

The Department of Planning and Community Development is responsible for the administration of planning and zoning within the City, and advises the Planning Commission and the Board of Appeals with regard to all zoning cases, annexations, subdivisions, site plans, zoning reclassifications, and Development Code amendments.

The Board of Appeals is comprised of five members and one alternate appointed by the City Council. The Board considers applications for special exceptions, variances, interpretations of the Development Code, and appeals from administrative decisions related to planning and zoning.

The Architectural Review Committee (ARC) is comprised of five members appointed by the City Council. The ARC reviews site, signage, and landscaping plans for development projects located in the two established overlay districts.

PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission is made up of seven members who are appointed by the City Council for staggered five-year terms. The Commission elects a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson from its membership for terms of one year, with eligibility for re-election. Mr. Mark Schlottman is Chairman and Ms. Dominique Edwards is Vice Chairman of the Planning Commission. Messrs. Michael Hiob and Jason Kolligs were appointed to the Commission in 2017.

The Commission typically meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., in the City Council Chambers, 60 North Parke Street, Aberdeen. The agenda is posted on the City's website and all meetings are open to the public.

The Commission is directly involved with all phases of the planning process. Certain powers and duties of the Commission are mandated by the Local Government and Land Use Articles of the Annotated Code of Maryland and the Code of the City of Aberdeen. The Commission is required to prepare and approve a Comprehensive Plan and recommend the Plan to the Council. The Commission reviews and approves recommendations to the Council for all preliminary site plans, preliminary and final subdivision plats, amendments to the Aberdeen Development Code, annexations and rezonings, changes or amendments to the Subdivision Regulations, and changes in land use or development arising from local, State, or Federal programs or policies. The Commission is required to file an Annual Report on its activities with the Mayor and Council and the Maryland Secretary of Planning. The new Commission members are

working on completing the required Maryland Department of Planning – Planning Commission/Planning Board Education Course. Mr. Mark Schlottman completed the Maryland Open Meetings Training and received the Certificate of Training.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTIVITIES

Development Code Amendments

The last major update to the Aberdeen Development Code occurred in 2006. While amendments have been added over the years, there was a need for a comprehensive review of the Code.

The Planning Commission reviewed proposed amendments between December 2014 and June 2016. In June 2016 their recommendations were incorporated and provided for final staff review. That process took place over 6 months and involved the review of the City's Public Works Director, City Attorney, and City Manager. The City Council made additional revisions and the Planning Commission held a second Public Hearing on June 14, 2017 to review the proposed amendments. Twenty-nine additional amendments were made by the City Council; these were reviewed by the Planning Commission and recommendations made accordingly. It is anticipated the updated Development Code will be adopted by the City Council in the Spring 2018.

Planning Commission Development Reviews

The Commission conducted regular review of subdivision plats, site plans, rezonings, and annexation requests. The Commission and staff reviewed these requests and ensured that compliance with the Aberdeen Development Code, Comprehensive Plan, and Subdivision Regulations was achieved. The following development activity was reviewed and actions noted: (Refer to the Map on Page 8 for the 2017 Development Activity)

1. Preliminary Site Plan for a proposed 75-room hotel located at 907 Barnette Lane, Lot 3-Lands of Gilmer, Tax Map 200, Parcel 52, zoned B-3 Highway Commercial District. Planning Commission did not recommend approval of the site plan. City Council approved the preliminary site plan.
2. Final Subdivision Plat for Lidl U.S. Operations located at 621 South Philadelphia Boulevard, Tax Map 206, Parcel 2480, zoned B-3 Highway Commercial District. Planning Commission recommended approval of the subdivision. City Council approved the final subdivision plat.
3. Preliminary Site Plan for a proposed 5,000 sq. ft. retail building located at 787 West Bel Air Avenue, Tax Map 200, Parcels 41 and 44, zoned B-3 Highway Commercial District. Planning Commission recommended approval of the site plan. City Council approved the preliminary site plan.
4. Preliminary Site Plan for a proposed 9,000 sq. ft. retail building for Beards Hill Plaza, 939 Beards Hill Road, Lot 1, Tax Map 200, Parcel 2766, zoned B-3 Highway Commercial District. Planning Commission recommended approval of the site plan. City Council approved the preliminary site plan.

5. Revised Preliminary Site Plan for a proposed 47,900 sq. ft. retail center, 5,166 sq. ft. convenience store, 1,734 sq. ft. restaurant, and a 12,495 sq. ft. day care center for I-95 Center LLC, Tax Map 51, Parcels 111-114, 400, 592, 751, and 879, zoned Integrated Business District. Planning Commission recommended approval of the site plan. City Council approved the preliminary site plan.
6. Final Subdivision Plat for the I-95 Center LLC, Lots 1 & 2, Tax Map 51, Parcels 111-114, 400, 592, 751, and 879, zoned Integrated Business District. Planning Commission recommended approval of the subdivision. City Council approved the final subdivision plat.
7. Preliminary Site Plan for a proposed 500,000 sq. ft. warehouse building for Manekin Pomeroy, 727 Old Philadelphia Road, Tax Map 209, Parcel 2570, zoned M-1 Light Industrial District. Planning Commission recommended approval of the site plan. City Council approved the preliminary site plan.
8. Preliminary Subdivision Plat for Manekin Pomeroy Warehouse, 727 Old Philadelphia Road, Tax Map 209, Parcel 2570, zoned M-1 Light Industrial District. Planning Commission recommended approval of the subdivision. City Council approved the preliminary subdivision plat.
9. Preliminary Site Plan for a proposed 58 lot, single-family residential development for Eagles Rest, Phase Two, Tax Map 51, Parcels 532 and 949, zoned Integrated Business District. Planning Commission recommended approval of the site plan. City Council approved the preliminary site plan.
10. Preliminary Site Plan for a proposed 2,370 sq. ft. restaurant for Starbucks, Middleton Holdings Property, Lot 1, 999 Middleton Road, Tax Map 202, Parcel 600, zoned B-3 Highway Commercial District. Planning Commission recommended approval of the site plan. City Council approved the preliminary site plan.
11. Revised Preliminary Site Plan for a proposed 25,400 sq. ft. grocery store for Lidl U.S. Operations located at 621 South Philadelphia Boulevard, Tax Map 206, Parcel 2480, zoned B-3 Highway Commercial District. Planning Commission recommended approval of the site plan. City Council approved the revised preliminary site plan.
12. Revised Final Subdivision Plat for Lidl U.S. Operations located at 621 South Philadelphia Boulevard, Tax Map 206, Parcel 2480, zoned B-3 Highway Commercial District. Planning Commission recommended approval of the subdivision. City Council approved the revised final subdivision plat.
13. Preliminary Site Plan for the Royal Farms Store expansion includes additional fuel pumps and self-serve car wash, 1021 Middleton Road, Tax Map 202, Parcel 2862, zoned B-3 Highway Commercial District. Planning Commission recommended approval of the site plan. City Council approved the preliminary site plan.

Other Planning Staff Work Efforts

The Department of Planning and Community Development has prepared an update to the Subdivision Regulations and will present these to the Planning Commission in March 2018.

The Department worked closely with the MDOT-MTA staff on improvements to the Aberdeen MARC Train Station to include submission of a Transportation Alternatives Program (T.A.P.) grant application for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity enhancements. The City was awarded the T.A.P. grant in the amount of \$700,000; design work will begin in 2018.

The Department received a \$25,000 Technical Assistance Grant to conduct a Feasibility Study for the Transit Oriented Development-Festival Square Area. The purpose of the study is to target specific community needs and locations for redevelopment activity.

DEVELOPMENT PATTERN CHANGES IN 2017

The Planning Commission did not review any annexation requests, zoning reclassifications, or sectional map amendments. The City issued the following building permits for new construction in calendar year 2017:

NEW BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED - 2017

Type of Construction	Number Issued	Total Estimated Construction Costs
Residential – Single Family Dwellings	18	\$6,184,400
Commercial	3	\$4,332,340
Industrial (additions and alterations)	8	\$6,723,565

All building permits were issued within the corporate limits of Aberdeen, which is a designated Priority Funding Area.

ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES ORDINANCE (APFO)

New residential and non-residential development projects are subject to Chapter 302, Growth Management, in the Code of the City of Aberdeen. The Departments of Planning and Community Development and Public Works completed amendments to this Chapter and the City Council adopted the changes on March 2016. The Growth Management requirements are applicable to school capacity, sewerage, water, and roads.

